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RURAL AREAS
DEVELOPMENT

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CSTE-COORDINATORS MEETING IN WASHINGTON REPORT PROGRESS

Area coordinators for Concerted Services in Training and Education (CSTE) programs in selected counties in three States, meeting recently in Washington, D.C., reported major progress in the program.

USDA, one of six Federal agencies backing CSTE, coordinates the CSTE program through which is provided special training in basic education, Head Start experience for preschooler's, and job skills training. The CSTE program uses existing Federal, State, and local programs in vocational training and basic education, but provides a coordinator and staff help to get these programs into maximum effective operation in areas where they are especially needed.

Here are some of the highlights of the CSTE progress to date:

EASTERN ARKANSAS CSTE PROGRAM--There the Manpower Development and Training Program has helped at least 239 out of 291 of those who completed courses to find employment--employment that utilizes their newly acquired job skills. (The other 52 did not submit a report although some were known to be employed.)

WEST CENTRAL MINNESOTA CSTE PROGRAM--Since the initiation of CSTE in Minnesota, over 2,000 people in need of job skills have enrolled in vocational training programs in the three-county area to improve their incomes and living conditions.

SANDOVAL COUNTY, NEW MEXICO, CSTE PROGRAM--Since the beginning of the CSTE program in New Mexico, over 9,000 persons of all ages in need of special training in basic education, Head Start (for preschooler's), and job skills have enrolled in some form of educational and/or vocational training program to improve themselves and their potential for employment in worthwhile jobs.

In all these areas, where CSTE has been in operation, from two to five times as many people have enrolled in some form of training and/or education as in Counties in which a CSTE coordinator was not assigned.

The CSTE program was begun in October 1965, in Saint Francis County, Ark.; Todd County, Minn.; and Sandoval County, N. Mex. These initial projects have been expanded since then to the neighboring counties of Cross and Lee in Arkansas and to Wadena and Otter Tail Counties in Minnesota. Currently Smaller Community

Surveys of McCurtain County, Oklahoma, and Calhoun County, West Virginia, are being conducted in preparation for the possible establishment of a CSTE program in those States.

* * *

CATFISH PLANT BOOSTS AREA INCOME

A catfish-processing plant being built at Hartford Lake, Alabama, is expected to boost gross income in the area by \$540,000 and eventually create 75 to 100 man-years of employment.

The plant, a new farm business for Eulon and James Enfinger, is a measure in the Wiregrass Resource Conservation and Development Project. It is designed to process about 20,000 pounds of catfish a week, or the production from some 500 acres of pond-raised channel catfish.

Fish for the plant will be bought on contract from local pond owners at 35 cents a pound. The average landowner with a 5-acre pond will gross about \$3,500 for 10,000 pounds of fish produced yearly.

Twelve people employed full time at the plant will machine dress and prepare the fish for sale, either fresh or blast frozen, and diners over a wide area will enjoy the product of this new farm business.

* * *

URBAN COUNTY ESTABLISHES SOIL CONSERVATION DISTRICT

Historic Yonkers and White Plains, New York, next door to New York City, entered the conservation arena recently when USDA signed a working agreement with the newly formed Westchester County Soil and Water Conservation District.

Westchester County's rolling hills, valleys, and plains were settled long before the colonies became a nation. The last few decades have brought the greatest changes in the area's long history. Rapid urban growth, accompanied by accelerated erosion, pollution, and resource waste, is taking its toll. The population of the county is expected to increase nearly 50 percent by 1985 to a total of 1,245,000.

The district's board of directors has developed a long-range program designed to preserve and restore the quality of the environment in the county. Up-to-date soil surveys will be made to aid in land-use planning; landowners, groups and public agencies will be assisted in solving soil and water management problems; valuable open spaces will be preserved and development of new recreation areas encouraged.

Nearly 99 percent of New York, the second most populous State in the Union, is now covered by the State's 56 soil and water conservation districts.

* * *

FARMERS HOME ADMINISTRATION GRANTS FUNDS FOR WATER AND SEWAGE PLANS IN 52 COLORADO COUNTIES

A grant of \$135,730 by the Farmers Home Administration will assist the people of 52 Colorado counties in preparing comprehensive plans in support of water and sewage system installation.

Significant features of the grant include:

- * The State Planning Office professional staff will prepare the water and sewage system plans at the request of county officials.

- * When the program is completed in about 2 years it will help to sharply reduce water pollution.

- * The program will promote the orderly and efficient growth of sparsely populated communities and rural areas and will provide data for the comprehensive "Colorado Plan."

- * The State Planning Office will provide maps and plans, which will include population, geographic and economic factors, to assure that future water and sanitary systems will be adequate for anticipated growth throughout Colorado.

Priorities for planning assistance to the 52 counties eligible for the grant will be established by the Farmers Home Administration. As these priorities are established, the Colorado Planning Office will get the recommendations of county planning officials. Only counties which officially request this assistance can benefit from the grant.

The 52 counties in Colorado that are eligible for planning help by Farmers Home Administration exclude only those counties in the State where water and sewage studies have already been completed or are under way. The FHA grants are specifically to assist rural areas and small communities of under 5,500 population.

* * *

CO-OP SAVING POTENTIAL FOR WESTERN KENTUCKY FARMERS SOARING

Grain production in Western Kentucky is increasing. And so is the possibility of potential savings for area farmers organizing grain marketing co-ops.

Farmers near Clay, Kentucky, with the assistance of Farmer Cooperative Service (FCS) and the Kentucky Extension Service, are looking into the feasibility of a grain marketing co-op. At FCS's suggestion they met with railroads in the area before deciding where to locate their grain storage elevators.

As a result one rail line filed a request for a rate reduction of 2 cents a bushel in corn shipping charges from Clay to points in Alabama and Mississippi.

This saving alone will mean that this group of farmers can increase their income some \$40,000 a year on an estimated shipment of 2 million bushels a year.

Groups of Kentucky farmers also visited the Arkansas Grain Corporation (AGC), Stuttgart, a co-op that since its organization has given members a per bushel price averaging 24 cents above the State average for soybeans and 25 cents above the U.S. average. Arkansas growers got 11 cents below the U.S. average from 1948 to 1957 before AGC organized.

Three Kentucky farm groups are now in the process of incorporating farmer-owned cooperative grain businesses. In two instances, new facilities will be built. In the other case, the group is considering buying an elevator.

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RECENT PUBLICATIONS

"Helping The Handicapped In Rural Areas," PA-860, Federal Extension Service. 12-page pamphlet listing sources of rehabilitation and employment assistance for the handicapped in rural areas, and suggesting action for the professional worker or local leader. Available from the Superintendent of Documents, U.S. Government Printing Office, Washington, D.C. 20402 (Price 10 cents).

"The Cooperative Approach To Outdoor Recreation," Information 57, Farmer Cooperative Service. 14-page guide for individuals and groups interested in organizing recreation cooperatives. Available upon request in small quantities from the Farmer Cooperative Service, U.S. Department of Agriculture, Washington, D.C. 20250.

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